

Remarks

This paper is in response to the Office Action mailed November 2, 2004. Applicant gratefully acknowledges the allowance of claims 1-12 and the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 14, 16-18, 20, 21, and 23. Claims 13, 19, and 22 are being cancelled, and claims 14-18, 20, 21, and 23 are being amended. In view of the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of claims 14-18, 20, 21, and 23, and the issuance of a Notice of Allowance for claims 1-18, 20, 21, and 23.

In the Office Action, the drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.84 because Figs. 9-21 do not have uniformly thick and well-defined lines, reference characters are not at least 1/8 inch high, and solid back shading is used. Replacement drawing sheets 1-13 including the corrected Figs. are enclosed. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.84 is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to provide antecedent basis for "the second passage" in line 2. Claim 15 is being amended to depend from claim 14 which provides antecedent basis for "second passage" in claim 15. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 13 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Tamba et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,901,819). Claims 13 and 22 are being cancelled. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 13 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ito et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,422,194). Claim 19 is being cancelled. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 19 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 14, 16-18, 20, 21, and 23 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In addition, claim 15 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in the Office Action, and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 14, 20, and 22 are being rewritten in independent form. Claims 15-18 are being amended to depend from claim 14.

In view of the above amendments, remarks, and enclosed replacement sheets 1-13, Applicant respectfully requests the issuance of a Notice of Allowance for claims 1-18, 20, 21, and 23. No additional fees for filing this response are believed to be due. However, if such fees are due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge them to deposit account no. 17-0055.

Respectfully submitted,



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